

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY PRIORITY

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NODIS

FOR AMBASSADOR CROSBY FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: MILL, MASS, PEPR, GV, FR, US

SUBJECT: PATROL BOATS FOR GUINEA

REF: A) CONAKRY 700, B) STATE 80087, C) PARIS 11230,
D) CONAKRY 558

1. WE IN AF APPRECIATE YOUR THOUGHTFUL RECLAMA ON GUINEA'S REQUEST FOR PATROL BOATS, AND HAVE REFLECTED ON YOUR MANY COGENT ARGUMENTS. WE CONCLUDE, HOWEVER, THAT NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO ENTER INTO A MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH GUINEA. IN ARRIVING AT OUR DECISION WE TOOK THE FOLLOWING FACTORS INTO CONSIDERATION.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 095880

2. PRESENT ASSISTANCE LEVEL TO GUINEA - WITH PL-480 TITLE II ASSISTANCE OF SOME DOLS 6.5 MILLION, ADDED TO DOLS 5.5 MILLION IN PL-480 TITLE I, AND THE AID FUNDED AGRICULTURAL PROJECT, OUR ASSISTANCE TO GUINEA FOR FY'78 WILL BE ALMOST DOLS 14 MILLION, THE HIGHEST IN MANY YEARS.

3. HUMAN RIGHTS - ALTHOUGH WE CONCUR WITH YOUR VIEW THAT

MANY OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION CHARGES LEVELED AGAINST GUINEA RELATE TO THE EARLY 1970'S AND THAT GUINEA IS MAKING AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE ITS HUMAN RIGHTS IMAGE IN RESPONSE TO OUR CONCERNS, WE BELIEVE THAT THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF

POLITICAL PRISONERS IN GUINEA WOULD PRESENT SERIOUS PROBLEMS HERE IN THE DEPARTMENT AND ON THE HILL FOR APPROVAL OF AN FMS SALE OR MUNITIONS CONTROL EXPORT PERMIT FOR GUINEA.

4. WIDER SCOPE OF FISHERIES ISSUE - WE HAVE SENT A CABLE TO MANY WEST AFRICAN POSTS INCLUDING CONAKRY SEEKING MORE INFORMATION ON THE PROBLEM OF FISHERIES AND PATROL BOATS. WE WANT TO INVESTIGATE WHETHER A REGIONAL FISHERIES PATROL MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE UNDER THE AUSPICES OF AN ORGANIZATION LIKE ECOWAS. SEVERAL NATIONS HAVE INQUIRED ABOUT PATROL BOATS IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE MOST RECENT BEING LIBERIA WHICH ASKED FOR FOUR DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. A COOPERATIVE REGIONAL APPROACH MIGHT ELIMINATE DUPLICATION OF EFFORT, LOWER COSTS, AND LESSEN MUTUAL SUSPICIONS AND RIVALRIES.

5. MONROVIA SUMMIT - THE RECENT RECONCILIATION BETWEEN GUINEA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AT MONROVIA SHOULD LEAD TO A DIMINUTION OF GUINEA'S SECURITY CONCERNS. WE STILL MAINTAIN THAT THERE IS NO CREDIBLE EXTERNAL SECURITY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 095880

THREAT TO GUINEA.

6. SPREADING THE BURDEN - PER REFTEL C GUINEA IS PURSUING PROCUREMENT OF PATROL CRAFT FROM FRANCE. WE HAVE ENCOURAGED THE FRENCH TO RESPOND FAVORABLY TO GUINEA'S PATROL BOAT REQUEST AND THEY HAVE INDICATED THEY PROBABLY WILL. WE ARE BOTH PLEASED AND RELIEVED BY THIS DEVELOPMENT. IT ALLOWS US TO CONCENTRATE ON ASSISTANCE DIRECTED AT MEETING BASIC HUMAN NEEDS, AND CONTRIBUTES TO OBJECTIVE OF EASING OUT THE SOVIETS IN THE MILITARY SPHERE WITHOUT INVOLVING US DIRECTLY. PROVIDING PATROL CRAFT WOULD OPEN A RELATIONSHIP WHICH COULD LEAD TO FURTHER REQUESTS, INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR LETHAL EQUIPMENT, WHICH WOULD BE EXTREMELY HARD FOR US TO SUPPLY. LET US BE THANKFUL THAT THE FRENCH ARE WILLING TO SHOULDER THE BURDEN ON THIS ONE.

7. FINANCING - BECAUSE OF GUINEA'S POOR INTERNATIONAL CREDIT RATING, AND BECAUSE THE PATROL BOATS WOULD NOT PRODUCE INCOMETHE GOG WOULD HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING FINANCING FOR U.S. BOATS.

8. ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT - WE ARE STILL FACED WITH CONTINUING OPPOSITION TO ARMS SALES ON THE HILL AND THERE ARE MANY MORE URGENT AND HIGHER PRIORITY ARMS SUPPLY REQUESTS PENDING THAN GUINEA'S.

9. IN DELIVERING OUR NO ON THE BOATS, WE DO NOT WISH TO REBUFF THE GUINEANS OR INDUCE THEM TO ABANDON THEIR EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE WEST. YOU MAY DRAW ON THE TALKING POINTS IN REF B AS YOU SEE FIT. THE TIMING OF OUR REPLY ALSO IS UP TO YOU. WE WONDER WHETHER IT IS URGENT THAT WE GIVE OUR FINAL ANSWER NOW. COULD WE WAIT UNTIL THE FRENCH SALE IS FIRM AND ONLY THEN CONFIRM TO THE GOG THAT WE CAN NOT PROVIDE BOATS BUT ARE PLEASED OUR FRIENDS CAN DO SO?

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 095880

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